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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HOSTS IFTAR DINNER

¶1. Nearly one hundred guests attended the Ambassador's annual Iftar dinner, hosted at the residence on September 20. The guest list included Ambassadors and chiefs of missions from Islamic nations and their spouses, members of Tokyo's small Muslim community, and Japanese academics who specialize in Islamic affairs. At sunset the guests broke their fasts with dates and lentil soup and were called to prayer by Imam Muhammad Akhtar Shaikh, amir of Al-Falah Masjid Yokohama. They then dined together on traditional Middle Eastern cuisine. In addition to the main party, a separate prayer area and dining room were set up in the Embassy's consular section for the drivers.

¶2. As in years past, the event was widely anticipated and greatly appreciated, according to one Ambassador who wondered how it would be possible to reciprocate. It also provided Embassy officers with a valuable opportunity to connect with members of Tokyo's small Muslim community and with scholars who study Japan's relations with the Moslem world.
Schieffer